

11-17-1861

Arthur McKinstry to Mother

Arthur McKinstry

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Camp Wool Nov 17th
Dear Mother,

I have watched and waited for a very long time for a letter from you. I don't often write where a letter is due me but as Lente Jones got one which says that you sent me a box, I presume that you sent it in that. The box was sent too late to find me at Camp Caldwell and is I suppose at Washington. I have sent for it but I sincerely hope that you did not pay the freight for in case it rots in the office I don't want to be the only loser. If you bought any flannel for drawers let me know what it cost. ~~for~~ I will send you the money to pay for

it as soon as I can do so by
express and I will also add
something for your private
benefit. I am doing well and
doing full military duty.

I brought my full kit
upon my back on the last
march of seven or eight miles
and it must weigh thirty
or forty pounds. Lente is looking
well. As a man can not cut
up very much here I should
not wonder if enlisting was a
good thing for him. As our
bakery is set up I suppose
that we shall stay here some
time and we have built bunk
and made a fire place and
even made a floor of split pines
with the flat side up. We are
pretty comfortable but we don't
owe it to Uncle Sam. for we

hard for our boards out of our own
pockets and indeed for pretty
much all we have that is cal-
culated to make us comfortable.
We use mustard, butter, pepper
and other little niceties for which
we pay. Butter I mean to have
cost what it may for our crackers
are very dry and don't slip down
very easily. We are to have the
genuine Minie rifled musket in
a day or two. I find that it is
a very nice thing to be the
correspondent of the Census for I
notice that the officers had rather
have a good word there than
a bad one. Take it all together
I am about as well off as a
private can be. As regards
liberty I can get passed out-
side the lines about at pleasure
which is better than most

can do. I was down to the river this afternoon and took a view at the Secesh batteries across. They fire at all the vessels that pass and don't hit any. He have two 12 pirs there which throw rifled shell across and several have burst in the rebel batteries.

The sutler agreed to bring my box and I hope to see it soon - in a day or two but I am afraid that something will be spoiled. Still it is very cold at Washington it may all be well. There will soon be an express run down here. Ephraim Smith Mrs Bumpfins son is dead. He died of fever. Visitors are not much allowed in the hospital and I only saw him once and then was

not allowed to stay long.

I hear often from Aunt Eliza
and answer accordingly. My friends
there have sent me a box
she tells me with eatables,
papers, books etc, that is very
nice for the list she gave was
just and all I wanted besides
what I think you sent.

It is getting late so I must close.
Give my love to the boys
and Father and to Fannie
and John. She ought to write
to me and I insist that you
and she get your likenesses
taken and sent for me.

Your aff son

Arthur

Direct to Washington

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May 27th 1862



Mrs Austin Chapin
Forestville
N. Y.

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